

Between Men, Mourning:

Time, Love and the Gift in the *Roman de la Rose*

"And [I] beg with joined hands for mercy for poor, sorrowful Guillaume, who has behaved so well towards me; may he be helped and comforted. If I did not pray to you on his behalf, I certainly ought to pray you at least to relieve Jean and make it easier for him to write; you confer this benefit upon him (for he will be born, I prophesy it)."

Jean de Meun¹

"Does not the most affirmative fidelity, its most concerned *act* of memory, involve us with an absolute past, not reducible to any form of presence: the dead being that will never itself return, never again be there, present to answer to or to share this faith?" Jacques Derrida²

¹ Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *The Romance of the Rose*, ed. and trans. Frances Horgan (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press 1994): 163. Henceforth, "Horgan." See also Guillaume de Lorris et Jean de Meun, *Le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Felix Lecoy (Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, Editeur, 1985, lines 10627-36. Henceforth, "Lecoy."

²Jacques Derrida, *Memoires for Paul de Man: The Wellek Library Lectures at the University of California, Irvine*, trans. Cecile Lindsay, Jonathan Culler and Eduardo Cadava (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986) : 66

This article is concerned with two romances – Jean de Meun’s with Guillaume de Lorris and Jacques Derrida’s with Paul de Man. While we do not imagine either couple as being together in an (erotically) romantic sense, this is an article about love, love between men. It is also and particularly an article about mourning as one of the functions of such romances. The mourning discussed here is a mourning without sadness, performed by philosophers and *as* philosophy. It is a form of mourning that might be read as mourning the very possibility of *having* loved, something that Judith Butler has called “a mourning for unlived possibilities.”³ I will argue that this mourning takes on the challenge of internalizing the *work* rather than the *being* of the lost Other, mourning without introjecting that which is mourned but rather leaving it intact in its alterity.

My discussion of these romances and of this type of mourning will focus on an instance when the writing of a text serves as a gift of mourning, forming a romantic bond between men. First and foremost, what follows is a reading of the *Roman de la Rose*, a thirteenth-century French allegorical poem. According to a story contained within it, this

³Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1999) : 139

poem was begun by Guillaume de Lorris and both finished and greatly expanded by Jean de Meun after Guillaume's death. The poem figures its own double authorship through the unusual device of presenting a character inside the story as a way of telling the story's origins: in the narrative, the God of Love (the speaker of the first epigraph) mourns the death of the first author and attempts to safeguard the birth of the second. Since Guillaume de Lorris' name does not appear in his part of the text, the only reason we know his name is that Jean de Meun includes it.⁴ In fact, he does not merely include it; he enshrines Guillaume de Lorris' name at the center of his own work, his continuation of the poem. In figuring its authorship thus, I argue, the *Rose* offers its own unusual, immanent theory of the relationship between authors and commentators, mourners and mourned, past and present, a theory that relies for its

⁴ We believe that there *was* a Guillaume de Lorris simply because versions of the poem without Jean de Meun's continuation exist – each one completed by a different poet. For an excellent discussion of the various continuations and redactions of the *Roman de La Rose*, complicating any simple understanding of the poem as possessed of two and only two authors, see Sylvia Huot's *The 'Romance of the Rose' and its Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). In this study, Huot argues that more authors than just Jean de Meun fell in love with and rewrote the *Roman de la Rose*, including one who names himself Gui de Mori, and the anonymous *remaineurs* who produced the B, K, L, M and N manuscript families. Huot concludes that "The *Rose* was known throughout the Middle Ages as a poem by Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, even when it contained hundreds of lines that did not derive from either of these poets" (335).

intelligibility on the possibility, indeed, the necessity, of romance between men.

This article discusses the figure of a mourning Jean de Meun produced with the narrative of the *Roman de la Rose*. For the purposes of this argument, what is interesting about the lived choices of the writer remembered by history under the name "Jean de Meun," rather than any "truth" about this man's sexual orientation, is that he made the choice to figure the economy of same-sex mourning in the midst of his poem's heterosexual quest.⁵ In what follows, I examine the ways in which Jean de Meun's rhetoric of mourning in the continuation of the *Roman de la Rose*

⁵ Most critics of the poem have noted that "the lover" advancing through the poem's narrative is not the same person as the poem's narrator, particularly in Jean de Meun's continuation. The "author," as figured in the text, is also not necessarily the same as the historical person who bore the name "Jean de Meun," no matter how forthrightly he names himself in the work. The mourning man that this article discusses is a fiction offered within the poem, a homosocial/ homosexual layer of meaning enveloping the narrator's heterosexual quest. "Jean de Meun," as presented in his own writings, is clearly a rhetorical construction, indeed one that is named "Jehan Clopinel" in the actual text. Eve Martin's analysis is helpful in reminding scholars working on Jean de Meun's introduction of himself as the poem's author through the speech by Amors at the midpoint of his continuation (a passage discussed at length in the following section) that the figure of "Jean de Meun" in the poem is not actually that of the historical man. Martin has argued that "neither the midpoint introduction of 'Jehan Clopinel' nor the apologia passage should be confused with Jean de Meun's presentation of himself as 'author.'" Consistent with medieval tradition, neither 'Clopinel' nor the 'I' are presented as embodying *auctoritas*." Eve Martin, "Away from Self-Authorship: Multiplying the 'Author' in Jean de Meun's *Roman de la Rose*" (*Modern Philology* 96, 1998:1-15):13. The tradition of considering the authoritative (but not quite *auctor*-level authoritative) voice in the poem's continuation as that of Jean de Meun goes all the way back to the early fifteenth century's heated debate about the morals of the poem. This debate is described briefly in the next section of this article and is collected in Eric Hicks' *Le Débat sur le 'Roman de la Rose'* (Paris: Champion, 1977).

thematizes the act of continuing the work of Guillaume de Lorris. Given the ways in which his text renders problematic the very fact of heterosexual romance (often described through reference to gift-giving), I will argue that Jean de Meun's continuation of Guillaume de Lorris' poem figures itself as a posthumous and therefore unreturnable, non-exchangeable gift to the dead poet. By contrast to the economy of heterosexual gift-exchange (treated as negatively fraught throughout the poem), the gift of extending Guillaume de Lorris' poem is figured in the text as the manifestation of an alternative, homosocial economy, giving Guillaume de Lorris a way to continue to act in the world while preserving his individuality, and his alterity. Beyond simply establishing the significance of bonds between men, I argue, this alternative gift economy performs a kind of queer romance between the poem's two authors. In this article, the queerness of the relation between continuator and the one whose work is continued comes to be understood in reference to Jacques Derrida's argument about the gift as a phenomenon profoundly implicated in time and narrativity, and in Derrida's impossible ethics of how one might properly mourn the Other.⁶

⁶ Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas have released a collection of Jacques Derrida's eulogies, *The Work of Mourning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001). This collection includes a good introduction to Derrida's theory of mourning. It is also a significant set of examples demonstrating how Derrida has put his theory of mourning

This article makes use of the word “romance” in a number of different ways: the word names the genre of the central work under discussion, but it also describes a certain stance in relation to the past, that of “romancing” or “romanticizing” it, for instance.⁷ In an associated sense, this word names an erotically-inflected affective connection, “romantic love.” In reading the *Rose*, we note that it is concerned with romance both in its generic form (the “*roman*”) and in its content (that of a quest for love undertaken by a young man). Part of the poem’s romance with the past takes the form of a mourning that narrates a genealogy of

into practice over the several decades of mourning both his teachers and his contemporaries. The roster of those mourned by Derrida includes Roland Barthes, Louis Althusser, Gilles Deleuze, and many others. Whether for reasons of biology and good fortune or because certain intellectual communities remain mostly male to this day, only one woman (Sarah Kofman) is memorialized as having been mourned by Derrida.

⁷A romantic vision of the critic’s work: reaching across the distance of history to grasp the hem or hand of some long-dead author, trying and perhaps, sublimely, failing to forge a connection with a lost presence. A version of this romance with history was employed by medieval authors, living admiringly in the shadows of their classical *auctores*. For a discussion of the rise of romance and its relation to *translatio studii* and the politics of history, please see Gabrielle M. Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), especially pages 61-67 where she traces the history of the term “romance,” a word that carries a different meaning in French than in English. The notion of a romance with the past has also functioned as a useful trope in recent work concerned with medieval sexuality that asks after the possibility of discovering queer medieval histories. This trope of romance has been useful to some critics as a means of undoing the putative neutrality normally taken up by the modern interpreter in relation to historically distant texts; it has also permitted a stance that rejects the opposition between continuist (“they are just like us”) and alteritist (“we can never know what they were because they were too different”) narratives of historical difference. See Carolyn Dinshaw, *Getting Medieval: Sexualities and Communities, Pre- and Postmodern*. (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1999); Kathleen Biddick, *The Shock of Medievalism*, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1998); and Louise Fradenburg and Carla Freccero, editors, *Premodern Sexualities* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

authorship. This mourning-as-genealogy is acting, *within* the allegory, as a rhetorical mode charting a depth of affect that exceeds the usual bounds of relations between authors. In its figuration of its own authorship, Jean de Meun's continuation charts a queer romance between the two authors of the allegory.

John of Salisbury's *Metalogicon* records an observation, attributed to Bernard of Chartres, that medieval writers are dwarves standing on the shoulders of giants.⁸ This famous dictum is a model of continuing the work of another that combines cooperation with a kind of parasitism: although the dwarves' feet do not reach the ground, and although they have not performed the labors that earn them their high places, they are situated *above* the giants. The dictum is helpful in that it can be applied very broadly to the projects of rewriting and of continuation that characterize much medieval writing.⁹ It works to describe commentary

⁸ John of Salisbury, *The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury: A Twelfth-Century Defense of the Verbal and Logical Arts of the Trivium* Trans. Daniel D. McGarry (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1955): 167

⁹ Tellingly, Simon Gaunt's useful introduction to medieval French literature bears the title "Retelling the Tale," underlining the way in which he is tracing the history of *re*-writing traditional tales in producing a history of vernacular writings from around 1100 through the late thirteenth century. See Simon Gaunt, *Retelling the Tale: An Introduction to Medieval French Literature* (London: Duckworth, 2001). This is no eccentric organizational trope, but rather an acknowledgement of the organizational principles governing some of the most important works in French literature. Nevertheless, although rewriting is a commonplace in medieval vernacular literatures, the figure of authorial mourning and the alternative economy of the queer gift present in the *Roman de la Rose* are specific to that work.

and exegesis (applied to the Bible as well as to theological works), and describes, as well, the production of “new” texts, including ones that moderns would call “literary.” Although the description seems to have had wide currency in its day and in the subsequent critical literature about medieval notions of authorship, it does not fully account for relationships like that between Jean de Meun and Guillaume de Lorris.

The relationship to the authoritative *auctor* enacted and discussed in the *Roman de la Rose* is a significantly different one from the *Metalogicon's* model. The continuation of the *Rose* offers a model that mourns its predecessor. More significantly, the way in which Jean de Meun builds and overbuilds on the foundation of the original project *preserves* Guillaume de Lorris' poem instead of using the previous work as a stepping-stone. The *Rose* also differs from models of translation and *translatio studii*, because, unlike them, it is premised on telling a *new* story. Even as parts of Jean de Meun's continuation translate significant portions of Latin works into Old French, the narrative itself is a continuation, not a translation. Lastly, the *Roman de la Rose* differs from other works that model a relationship with their past because it is organized through the trope of romance between men. Although male-male textual exchange is significant in many medieval texts, the queer

economy of the *Rose* is far more explicit than it appears to be in later texts like, for instance, the *Divina Commedia* (although in the encounter with Brunetto Latini, rather than in the tender regard in which Dante holds Virgil, we might find some echo of the *Rose*). The mourning enacted in the *Roman de la Rose* goes beyond that which is generally viewed as a sort of lustless, misogynist homosociality that might be adduced of any all-male intellectual community in the Middle Ages and can easily be understood as functioning in the community of male authors and *auctores*. Through its excess of mourning for the dead *auctor*, the relation between Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun becomes ever more queerly romantic.¹⁰

The model of mourning as the way of thinking about continuing the work of another responds to and amplifies contemporary critical interest in theories of mourning as ways of thinking literary production.

¹⁰ David Halperin, in the eponymous chapter of his volume, *How to do the History of Homosexuality* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002; previously published under the same name in *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 6, no.1 (2000): 87-124) offers and discusses four provisional "pre-homosexual categories of male sex and gender deviance...(1) effeminacy (2) paederasty or 'active' sodomy (3) friendship or male love, and (4) passivity or inversion" (109). His discussion of how the third category (the category to which the queer romance figured in the *Rose* between Jean de Meun and Guillaume de Lorris might be said to belong) functions is on pages 117-121 of that volume. For some excellent recent discussions of medieval homosexuality, see *Constructing Medieval Sexuality*, ed. Karma Lochrie, Peggy McCracken, and James A. Schultz (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1997) and *Queering the Middle Ages*, ed. Glenn Burger and Steven F. Kruger (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2001).

Theorizing mourning has been the concern of critics writing in a psychoanalytic mode, following upon Freud's meditations on mourning and melancholia.¹¹ Theorizing mourning as constitutive of certain literary modes – allegory in particular – formed a significant part of the thinking of another set of critics, those whose writings were influenced by Walter Benjamin, critics like Paul de Man and Jacques Derrida.¹²

Combining the insights of these different modes of criticism, Judith Butler has been among those who write about mourning and the politics of sexuality. In *The Psychic Life of Power*, Butler theorizes mourning as a mode of relating to object choice:

If we accept the notion that the prohibition on homosexuality operates throughout a largely heterosexual culture as one of its defining operations, then the loss of

¹¹Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-74) 14:244-45

¹²See, for instance, Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*. trans. John Osborne. (London, New York: Verso, 1977), Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke and Proust* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979) and Jacques Derrida, *Memoires*. For an excellent discussion of the intimate connections between "postmodernism" and mourning, see Eric Santner, *Stranded Objects: Mourning, Memory and Film in Postwar Germany* (Ithaca: Cornell UP 1990). For a rather different set of perspectives on mourning, see the recent collection *Loss*, edited by David Kazanjian and David Eng (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), and Douglas Crimp's recent edition of his critical writing over the past several decades, entitled *Melancholia and Moralism: Essays On AIDS and Queer Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002.)

homosexual objects and aims...would appear to be
foreclosed from the start. I say 'foreclosed' to suggest that
this is a preemptive loss, a mourning for unlived
possibilities....When certain kinds of losses are compelled by
a set of culturally prevalent prohibitions, we might expect a
culturally prevalent form of melancholia, one which signals
the internalization of the ungrieved and ungrievable
homosexual cathexis.¹³

My argument in this article might be read as opening up the possibility
that the foreclosure named by Butler might be circumvented, albeit in a
very limited way. Rather than seeing the kind of medieval same-sex
romance figured in the *Roman de la Rose* as one that can only be
mourned as "unlived possibilities," I argue that the form of mourning
enacted in the poem *lives out* a form of homosexual – or perhaps simply
queer? – romance. The structure of the allegory as a whole and,
particularly, Jean de Meun's discussion of Guillaume de Lorris opens up
the possibility of depicting an avowable and avowed mourning for an
always-already lost same-sex object (Guillaume is dead by the time Jean is

¹³ Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1999) : 139

born), rather than eternally necessitating the silent foreclosures of melancholia.

The internalization of the foreclosed same-sex other happens through what Jacques Derrida has called a "mourning without sadness" rather than taking the form of melancholic passivity indicated by Butler's phrase "mourning for unlived possibilities." The mode of that mourning is that of an allegorical writing, figuratively bringing back the lost object and permitting him to achieve the goal that he desires, even though that goal seems to be a quest for heterosexual fulfillment (although it might be noted that, if one takes up the literal allegory of the *Roman*, the Rose is a horticultural fact rather than a properly heterosexual female love object). This is a kind of mourning based on the giving of a pure and unreturnable gift, rather than on an exchange, a situation where reciprocation is expected or, indeed, possible. Of course, what is achieved as a result of Jean de Meun's gift is *not* a fully realized fulfillment of same-sex desire. Instead, what Jean de Meun accomplishes can be understood as a way of living out some of Butler's "unlived possibilities" at the level of the narrative.

Queer scholarship has worked on mourning and on melancholia for a generation now, in attempts to address immediate and devastating

losses impacting our communities. In what follows, I demonstrate how an act of same-sex mourning can be understood as a queer act, and as a positive acknowledgement of a lost life's value. I'm afraid that this is no joyous record of recovering long-lost gay history. Instead, it's an attempt to trace something about what kinds of same-sex desire remain possible when same-sex love (only later to be understood as "homosexuality") is all but impossible.

One of the most confusing aspects of the *Rose* is the profound distrust of heterosexuality that the poem's speakers repeatedly evince, amid a "plot" ostensibly committed to the attainment of heterosexual union.¹⁴ This distrust tends to be figured through discussions of gift exchange, "don/guerredon" or "gift/countergift," which I will discuss at some length in a future section. Always, hanging over the discussion of achieving a woman's love there persists the fear that this love (or sexual yielding) can be purchased with a gift. Even when not worrying that all women are fundamentally prostitutes, the counselors to the *Rose*'s lover

¹⁴ Perhaps it would be more accurate to say "different-sex desire," for contrast with "same-sex," since heterosexuality has also not been invented yet in the period that I discuss; however, such accuracy would necessitate intolerably clunky prose.

fear that love given in exchange for service or gift-giving is fundamentally tainted.

By contrast, the alternative queer economy of the poem admits of no *guerredon*/countergift, and functions as a kind of *pure* gift-giving, one with no desire for reciprocation. This purity is posited, and defined as impossible, in Derrida's work on the gift, and will be discussed in a later section. It is also implicit in the worries about the impurity of counter-gifts in the allegory's discourse about women. In the context of the allegory's discussion of its own authorship, the troubled and troublesome fact of heterosexual romance can be read as just one option (albeit a significantly weighted option), which the text critiques and to which it tentatively offers an alternative. Through such a reading, the *Roman de la Rose* becomes available to its modern critics as a text that embodies a romance with its own past that is also a romance between men.

What it means to speak of time, love and the gift together with queer pre-modern romance is made clearer when the thirteenth-century allegory is read along with a set of lectures given at the close of the twentieth century by Jacques Derrida. These are the lectures in which

Derrida mourns the death of Paul de Man and, in assessing his legacy,¹⁵ takes up aspects of de Man's thought on allegory and the literary (much of which, incidentally, appears on writings about Romanticism, yet another occurrence of "romance"). The comparison between the texts, thus, has both a thematic and a formal justification. Both the *Rose* and Derrida's *Memoires Pour Paul de Man* take considerations of grief, love, and the work of writing and rewriting as themes. They read together so richly because, as part of their own narrative development, both of these texts are formally explained as necessitated by the death of one author (and, consequently, the silencing of his written voice) and the emergence of another author, who continues the story of the first in his own voice, turning it to his own, often rather different, ends.

Through thinking these two couples together, and focusing on both Jacques Derrida's and Jean de Meun's acts of commemoration and

¹⁵A newer edition of these lectures includes a lengthy article in which Derrida responds to the discovery of Paul de Man's wartime collaborationist writings and assesses his legacy in their light. It is, I believe, impossible to speak de Man's name without in some way acknowledging the shock and disappointment of these late additions to the corpus of his writing. However, unlike many critics – including some medievalists (for instance, C. Stephen Jaeger's keynote address at "Alike in Dignity: Historical and Literary Approaches to Medieval Texts" Second Annual Graduate Medieval Conference (Berkeley, University of California, Berkeley) Spring 2001) – I am unwilling to dismiss all of de Man's (and his associates') contributions based on these writings, or to explain the group of literary critics often mis-labeled "deconstructive" as working to undo the truth-value of texts in an endless attempt to negate and expiate their shame. As medievalists, we know better than to dismiss writings produced in the shadow of ideology outright, without looking into their self-contradictions and complexities.

commentary, I argue that the Derridian form of impossible mourning is enacted by the *Roman de la Rose* through its allegorical mode. What is this impossible mourning? Impossible mourning is one that acknowledges these twin conditions: (1) to mourn is to speak of someone who cannot answer, one who is therefore reduced to what the speaker remembers and (2) the responsibility in mourning is to preserve the other in his alterity rather than reduce him to that which has been interiorized by the speaker. This task is impossible given its conditions – it is impossible for Derrida to cause de Man to continue speaking as himself after his death, and impossible not to preserve the mourned person as a set of images and stories inside oneself, images and stories that say as much about the one who remembers as the one who is remembered. And yet Derrida emphasizes the necessity of making an *attempt* to mourn in this impossible way.

In his text of mourning, Derrida writes that “to respect the other *as* other is the impossible task of mourning,”¹⁶ impossible because memory so often takes the form of interiorization, of making the other into something that “no longer quite seems to be the other, because we grieve

¹⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Memoires for Paul de Man: The Wellek Library Lectures at the University of California, Irvine*, trans. Cecile Lindsay, Jonathan Culler and Eduardo Cadava (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986): 34

for him and bear him *in us*, like an unborn child, like a future.”¹⁷ This comparison to the unborn child must recall us to this article’s first epigraph, the God of Love’s prayer that the one who will continue the work of Guillaume de Lorris have a safe birth. To mourn is, after all, to move into the future rather than to remain immobile in the moment of loss. It is this as well as the possibility of avowing loss that differentiates mourning from melancholia. Derrida sets difficult parameters for properly ethical mourning, and engages in a rhetoric of inevitable failure (this is a somewhat romantic rhetoric, the pleurably tragic language of so much of Derrida’s writing). Using once again the imagery of pregnancy, Derrida proceeds to speak of the success within the failure of mourning, when what occurs is “an aborted interiorization...[which is] at the same time a respect for the other as other, a sort of tender rejection, a movement of renunciation which leaves the other alone, outside, over there, in his death, outside of us.”¹⁸ The gift of continuing a loved one’s work mourns without imagining the breaking down of boundaries between self and other that mourning through psychic interiorization requires. It effects the

¹⁷ Jacques Derrida, *Memoires for Paul de Man: The Wellek Library Lectures at the University of California, Irvine*, trans. Cecile Lindsay, Jonathan Culler and Eduardo Cadava (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986): 35

¹⁸ Jacques Derrida, *Memoires for Paul de Man: The Wellek Library Lectures at the University of California, Irvine*, trans. Cecile Lindsay, Jonathan Culler and Eduardo Cadava (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986) : 35

renunciation that Derrida describes, but perhaps only partially, incompletely, impossibly.

In the *Roman de la Rose*, functions in tandem with allegorical representation. It is not quite *prosopopeia*, the rhetorical mode deeply examined by de Man in his theoretical writings, a mode that permits the dead to speak through their very absence.¹⁹ Rather than keeping Guillaume somehow alive *inside* Jean de Meun, the mourning in the *Rose* strives to permit the mourned to keep his separateness and is capable of doing so because the poem takes place in the representational realm of allegory (rather than, say, in a mode marked by the literal or by “realism”). According to Derrida, allegory is a privileged mode for impossible mourning because by its very definition “it says in another way something *about the other*.”²⁰ Jean de Meun’s allegory says something about the lost

¹⁹ As defined in *Rhetorica Ad Henennium* “prosopopeia” is that which “consists in representing an absent person as present, or in making a mute thing or one lacking form articulate” trans. and ed. Harry Caplan Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1954) Book IV, 66. Paul de Man wrote extensively on prosopopeia, defining it most significantly as that which “makes accessible to the senses, in this case the ear, a voice which is out of earshot because it is no longer alive” Paul de Man, “The Epistemology of Metaphor” in *Aesthetic Ideology. Theory and History of Literature*, (Vol. 65. Minneapolis: Minnesota Press, 1996) :24. It is this modified definition of de Man’s which best describes the sort of impossible mourning Derrida envisions as necessary, necessary indeed for properly mourning de Man. This is also the very structure of mourning that structures in the *Roman de la Rose*, where Guillaume de Lorris continues to function as the the narrator even after his death (both when the readers had not yet been informed that he is dead, and after the God of Love’s mournful speech).

²⁰ Jacques Derrida, *Memoires for Paul de Man: The Wellek Library Lectures at the University of California, Irvine*, trans. Cecile Lindsay, Jonathan Culler and Eduardo Cadava (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986): 79.

Guillaume de Lorris. The passage where Jean's character, the God of Love, mourns Guillaume's passing enacts both Derrida's "tender rejection," the rejection that leaves Guillaume outside the present tense of the allegorical moment (the God of Love makes it clear that Guillaume is dead by the time he is named in the text) and brings him into the text, as if alive, naming him as author and giving his narratorial alter ego a future.

Jean de Meun, enacting some form of impossible mourning as part of the rhetorical conceit of his text, figuratively brings back the lost Guillaume de Lorris and gives him the gift of achieving his goals, including fulfillment of the heterosexual quest that structures the allegory they are both writing. Rather than internalizing Guillaume de Lorris, Jean de Meun's text leaves his text be, continuing but not revising or distorting it. More significantly still, Jean de Meun guarantees the significance of Guillaume de Lorris' work by completing it. He justifies annexing his own project to Guillaume's through the trope of mourning. The rhetoric that Jean de Meun relies upon to explain his own position as second author is a rhetoric of the gift. Continuing the work of another (particularly in the case of the double-authored *Rose*) represents a mourning for the foreclosed possibilities of same-sex romance. According to my reading,

this romance lies at the hidden and powerful center of a work that has been traditionally perceived as a great allegory of heterosexual love.²¹

In the *Roman de la Rose*, the model of literary succession is premised on mourning, and on the gift-economy of queer romance (understood, here, as an alternative to the poem's figuration of heterosexual exchange). It is also an exemplary instance of how the symptoms of a foreclosed romance between men might be found in pre-modern works, located in the formal organization and self-conscious rhetorical deployment of the tropes of desire rather than in literal accounts.

I: Readers of the Romance

Describing the purpose of his work in its first forty-odd lines, Guillaume de Lorris famously promises that it is the *Roman de la Rose* "ou

²¹ Not every critic sees Jean de Meun's continuation of Guillaume de Lorris' poem as a generous act; Peter Allen, in his discussion of Jean de Meun's relationship with Ovid, notes in passing that "From the beginning...Jean's text is parasitic, even predatory." Peter Allen, *The Art of Love: Amatory Fiction from Ovid to the Romance of the Rose* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992): 80. He goes on to note that "Jean wants both to be and to conquer his predecessors, to imitate their works and to supersede them." (13). Later in the same chapter of his book, Allen describes Jean de Meun as having "killed off" two of his predecessor-authors (in this case, Ovid as well as Guillaume de Lorris) "in order to usurp their voices" (83). I offer Allen's version of the relationship because it's so surprising to me; reading the same lines, we have had such different responses to the affective quality of the poem's words that there cannot even be argument about which of us is correct, there can only be the spinning-out of the implications that result from following my particular interpretation.

l'art d'Amors est tote enclose" (Lecoy, line 38) ("in which the whole art of love is contained." (Horgan, 3) but could also be "where the art of Love is put fully into an enclosure)²² This art of love, unlike Ovid's, is a narrative rather than a text of instruction. The narrative frames within which characters give advice thoroughly overwhelm its love-manual character, particularly since love-advisor after love-advisor is discovered to be thoroughly unreliable and unhelpful to the protagonist. While the narrative frames are predominant, the story's diagesis is actually fairly simple and not very much "occurs."

The story proceeds much like this: the Lover²³ seeks to win the Rose's love, and although he, himself, is One, she is Many – Many, rather,

²²It should be noted that while the phrase is generally translated as "the art of love," "Amors" is a character in the allegory, subsequently referred to in this article as "The God of Love," taking from the conventions established by critics and translators. Therefore, whether the art of love is general or the art as taught by a particular allegorical character is not entirely clear from this passage. Amors the character also has the privilege, within de Meun's section of the allegory, to give the monologue discussing the poem's authorship, with which Part II of this article is particularly concerned. Therefore, if this poem is at least secondarily the "art of the God of Love," Amors is being figured in the de Lorris *incipit* as yet another author and definitely as an authority. Through the intervention of the poem – and the interpellation of Amors into a genealogy of authorship, along with Guillaume de Lorris, this "art of love" comes to also encompass an "art of authorship."

²³In the Lecoy edition, "amanz" is not capitalized although Bel Acueill and Faus Semblant, etc., are. Capitalization is normally the editor's prerogative, since manuscripts are written without capital letters, and Lecoy's choice reflects the way in which the narrator-lover is not an allegorical character, in part because he represents no one, but speaks as the entirety of a single person. By contrast, Bel Acueil is capitalized by editors as a personification, because he represents one aspect of a psyche rather than a whole, and thereby participates in the allegorical mode.

are the representations of her attitude towards her suitor, since they are portrayed by a multiplicity of personifications, including Dangier (Resistance), Franchise (Openness), and, most particularly, Bel Acueill (Fair Welcome). The lover seeks help in capturing the Rose's positive mode of reception, Fair Welcome, which is at a fairly early point in the text imprisoned by Jealousy. First earning the good will of Fair Welcome and then liberating him from prison with the help of an army of personifications led by Amors (The God of Love) accounts for most of the story's events. The bulk of the text consists of speeches by variously helpful or unhelpful advisors to the lover. The section by Guillaume de Lorris depicts how the narrator falls in love with the rose and finds Bel Acueil imprisoned. In short, Jean de Meun's continuation is, to cite Sarah Kay's elegant summary, "less action than re-enactment: the interest lies not so much in narrative as in reworking earlier material."²⁴

The love object of the text has conventionally been supposed to be the lady represented as the Rose -- but it is for her Fair Welcome, the character of Bel Acueill, that the lover's tears are shed and of whom kisses are demanded. Bel Acueill is the lover's confidant, he is present whenever the lover is happily united with the lady, as when "Bel Acueil, qui senti

²⁴ Sarah Kay, *The Romance of the Rose* (London: Grant and Cutler Ltd., 1995) :52-3.

l'eer/du brandon, sanz plus deloer, m'otroia un bessier en dons" (lines 3455-57, Lecoy) ("Fair welcoming, feeling the warmth of [Venus's] torch, accorded me the gift of a kiss without further delay." p.53, Horgan). This mediation by a male-gendered allegorical character permits the Rose herself to remain in the perfection of utter passivity appropriate to a flower and the total purity appropriate to a lady. It also permitted C.S. Lewis (in the text that enshrined the claim that the *Roman de la Rose* "invented" courtly love in Western literature) to accuse de Meun of being a bad allegorist for giving Bel Acueil so many feminine traits (rather than treating him, consistently, as an abstract aspect of the Rose), which, given Bel Acueil's masculine pronouns, Lewis terms "absurd."²⁵ A number of critics have agreed with Lewis' overall reading, understanding the allegory as either praise or indictment of exclusively heterosexual romance.²⁶

²⁵C.S. Lewis, *Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition*. First published 1936 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958) : 140.

²⁶ Rosemund Tuve in *Allegorical Imagery: Some Medieval Books and Their Posterity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966) insists on Bel Acueil's status as a "psychological abstraction"; John V. Fleming in *The Roman de la Rose: A Study in Allegory and Iconography* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969) discusses the arbitrariness of grammatical gender and the confusion of genders in manuscript illustrations of the poem, arguing that the mercurial gender of the character of Bel Acueil as a means of emphasizing the mercurial nature of the Rose's welcome, a complex modification in the allegorical style of the poem since the time of Guillaume de Lorris (see pp. 43-46). For a more recent discussion that notes the confusing fact of Bel Acueil's gender but reads it otherwise than through its hint of homosexuality, see Douglas Kelly in *Internal Difference and Meanings in the 'Roman de la Rose'* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995). Kelly discusses the problem of gender in the poem on pages 105-122 of this book; along the way, he dismisses the confusion and anxiety about sexual orientation that might be caused by the male gender of Bel Acueil. According to

However, particularly in light of the poem's frequent indictments of heterosexual exchange (to be discussed more fully in the following section), critics both medieval and modern seem to have found something to trouble the poem's allegorical logic in the love between the lover and Fair Welcome.

At the turn of the fourteenth century, Christine de Pizan and Jean Gerson, the Chancellor of Paris, responded vehemently to the *Rose*, accusing it of being a misogynist text in a series of exchanges which came to be called the *Querelle de la Rose* and represented perhaps the first battle between schools of literary criticism on record, since a number of writers came forward to defend it.²⁷

Kelly, "the problem of personifications of one grammatical gender that refer to a person of the other sexual gender seems less acute for native speakers of gender-marked languages than it does for speakers of languages like English that are no longer so marked." (107). Simon Gaunt has already noted, in "Bel Accueil and the Improper Allegory of the *Romance of the Rose*" *New Medieval Literatures*, 2 (1998):65-93, (see pages 68 and 84-85) how Kelly ignores the possibility of homosexuality entering into the narrative at this juncture at some peril to his interpretation of the poem as a whole, since it necessitates reading Jean de Meun as "a typical *moraliste*" (Gaunt p. 85, Kelly p. 153) inveigling against deviant sexuality by representing it in his poem. Such a reading would mean that Jean is something of a failure at making a moral point (since the actual content of the moral message of the text has now been found worthy of debate for many centuries) and the *Roman de la Rose's* multi-voiced complexity is lost.

²⁷Please see Eric Hicks, ed. *Le Débat sur le 'Roman de la Rose'* (Paris: Champion, 1977), a collection of the letters exchanged in the debate. For a discussion of the debate, see Julian M.L. Hill, *The Medieval Debate on Jean de Meung's 'Roman de la Rose': Morality vs. Art* (Lewiston, NY: Mellen Press, 1991) and David Hult's "Words and Deeds: Jean de Meun's *Romance of the Rose* and the Hermeneutics of Censorship" in *New Literary History*, 28:345-366 (1997), an article which contextualized the *Querelle* through a reading of Catherine McKinnon's writings about pornography.

Recently, some critics have been questioning the enthronement of heterosexual romance supposedly enacted in the *Rose*. In her critical guide to the *Roman de la Rose*, Sarah Kays discusses the ways in which misogyny in Guillaume de Lorris' portion of the poem functions to deprive the Rose of any subjectivity of "her" own, and how the figure of Bel Accueil "shows the extent to which 'courtly love' is powered by homosocial desire, that is, desire by men for the values (such as status) they find only in other men."²⁸ Kays emphasizes the possibility that Jean de Meun is offering a critique of misogyny in her reading. While the debate over the power of female personifications in the poem is a significant one, it does not negate the possibility that there is more *sex* in the relationship between these men than the relatively bloodless desire for status etc. that the term "homosociality" describes in Kays' interpretation. Michel Zink, in an article provocatively entitled "Bel-Accueil Le Travesti" makes a similar argument: that the narrator's relationship with Bel Accueil to function as as a sort of transitionally homosexual one which permits heterosexuality to function properly. Zink discusses the way in which the personification's male gender permits him to function as the narrator's comrade, and produces the phantasm of an "amour travesti," wherein the narrator, who cannot

²⁸ Sarah Kay, *The Romance of the Rose* (London: Grant and Cutler Ltd., 1995) :46

approach a woman directly, *can* have relations with a male character who serves as his intermediary and can therefore achieve his (heterosexual) goal with the help of the transitional homosexual object. In this article, Zink notes the possibility that such a character permits the narrator to “live out the fantasy of homosexuality as a substitute for the sexual union and as a precondition to such a union” (“vit le fantasme de l’*homo-sexualité* comme un succédané de l’union sexuelle et comme un préalable à cette union.”²⁹ This is the dream of an understanding buddy who is, at the same time, a woman – certainly one of the mechanisms at work in the poem’s portrayal of contact with the Rose as almost infinitely mediated by the various allegorical figures of her capricious moods.

Whatever “homosexuality” might have meant in the thirteenth century, it is certainly a foreclosed possibility. Within the *Roman de la Rose*, a character taken directly from the work of Latin allegorist and theologian Alan de Lille makes a speech that denounces homosexual acts. In his speech, “Genius” uses “heterosexuality as a synecdoche for virtuous behavior, just as Alan used homosexuality as a synecdoche for vice.”³⁰ In

²⁹ Michael Zink, “Bel Accueil Le Travesti,” *Littérature* 47 October 1982 : 31-40, p. 38. My translation, Zink’s italics.

³⁰ Marc-René Jung, “Jean de Meun et l’allegorie” in *Cahiers de l’Association Internationale des Etudes Françaises* 28 (1976): 21-36, p. 32 cited in Sylvia Huot, in ‘*The Romance of the Rose*’ and its Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), with the correction that “it

a recent article that deals with both Alan de Lille's *Plaint of Nature* and the *Roman de la Rose*, Susan Shibanoﬀ addresses the discourse of sodomy in both works in terms of their figuration of authorship. She argues that both Jean de Meun's and Alan de Lille's writings reflect a shift from figurations of authorship as implicated in sodomy (a tradition that stems from the Ovidian portrayal of Orpheus as the first poet as well as ancient inventor of boy-love) to models of heterosexual reproduction derived from the Aristotelian causality. The latter emerges, Shibanoﬀ argues, as *the* proper means of figuring masculine creativity. Shibanoﬀ does not read the *Rose* as, itself, a queer text. Concentrating on a speech that condemns homosexuality, taken from Alan de Lille and rewritten by Jean de Meun, she argues that the latter "labors to correct those unresolved aspects of Alan's Genius and Nature that leave sodomy deeply inscribed in the text of the *Plaint*." ³¹ Jean de Meun's portion of the *Roman de la Rose*, in this understanding, is responding to a tension between models of authorship. The poem is understood as marked by queerness rather than actually *being* a queer text or producing queer effects. This understanding

is not Jean but Genius for whom heterosexuality is a synecdoche for virtuous behavior." (p. 171),

³¹ Susan Shibanoﬀ, "Sodomy's Mark: Alan de Lille, Jean de Meun, and the Medieval Theory of Authorship" in *Queering the Middle Ages*, ed. Glenn Burger and Steven F. Kruger (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2001): 38.

of the poem underlines the ways in which the homosexual romance that I discuss in this article ought to be understood as a cultural symptom and not as a manifestation of a historical Jean de Meun's psychological interiority, his own individual desire. Shibanoff's article also makes it clear why the discussion of authorship in the poem is precisely the location where the clearest figuration of same-sex romance is to be found.

In some of the most recent work about the homosexual subtext of the *Roman de la Rose*, Simon Gaunt has argued that there is something queer about a heterosexual romance entirely mediated by the affection between the lover and the (male) figure of the lady's receptivity (especially when the lady's no lady but a flower).³² Gaunt analyzes the relationship

³²Simon Gaunt, "Bel Acueil and the Improper Allegory of the Romance of the Rose" *New Medieval Literatures*, 2 (1998): 65-93. It should be noted that Bel Acueil is male for grammatical reasons, since "accueil" is a masculine noun. Critics like Douglas Kelly, passing over the possibility of homosexuality in the poem, tend to emphasize the lack of larger significance and the arbitrariness of allegorical gender, since it merely reflects the arbitrariness of noun gender in Romance languages. However, one cannot help but note that would have been possible for Jean de Meun and Guillaume de Lorris, either or both, to choose a different, feminine-nouned personification on which to focus the representation of the Rose's desired favor. Possibly, a female personification would have introduced an element of infidelity – Amanz would be asking for kisses of a female someone who was not his lady. In his *Self-Fulfilling Prophecies*, Hult remarks that "Bel Acueil's masculinity, which might appear to be an impediment or a humorous mistake, in actuality serves the important purpose of rendering him totally untouchable, since such a homoerotic relationship is unthinkable in the expressive register of courtly poetry" David Hult, *Self-Fulfilling Prophecies: Readership and Authority in the First 'Roman de la Rose'* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 1986) : 244 This is particularly interesting since the "untouchable" Bel Acueil is the figure for the Rose's receptivity to being touched, the figure upon whom romantic hopes are pinned. The case for a queer *Rose* needs corroborating evidence beyond Bel Acueil's masculine gender, which Gaunt's article offers through a reading of the *Rose*'s reader reception in the Middle Ages, and mine continues to build.

between the literal and the figurative in the allegory and finds that a certain level of confusion about Bel Acueil's gender (and hence the sexuality of the narrator) is not a recent development. His analysis of the romance's fourteenth-century manuscripts documents the ways in which the relationship between the lover and Bel Acueil was represented by some of the text's illustrators in a manner that implied (and was troubled by) the possibility of same-sex affection being expressed through the allegory – some of these illustrators represented Bel Acueil as female, for instance, to assuage the confusion caused by his masculinity within the text. Gaunt's article is particularly useful in this regard, since his analysis of the poem's illustrations demonstrates the fact that interest in the relationship between Bel Acueil and the narrator, and about the implications of this relationship for the poem's ostensibly heterosexual plot simply cannot be called anachronistic. It is also useful in the ways in which it traces the co-imbrication of the allegorical mode and the sexual problematic of the poem, especially at the junctures where the way in which the poem is written "calls into question between 'straight' and 'perverted' writing that Genius evokes, as well as retrospectively the opposition between 'proper' and 'improper' signification that Raison outlines, and by extension, of course, the opposition between 'straight'

and 'perverted' sexual acts...the neat oppositions that appear to structure the poem [are]...even more hopelessly, though willfully, confused."³³ This is a queer *Rose* indeed, to which this article responds by considering the queerness of author-to-author love as an addition to the expression of same-sex desire in the narrative of Amanz and Bel Acueil.³⁴

The few critics who have recently expressed the desire to push against the dominant reading of the *Roman de la Rose* as a heterosexual romance — attracted, perhaps, by the pleasures of overturning C.S. Lewis' description of it as the apotheosis of all romantic love — have largely focused on the figure of Bel Acueil. I argue that, in addition to the grammatical curiosity that is Bel Acueil, there is a significant additional justification for critics' suspicions that the Rose is neither as unimpeachably heterosexual as it may have seemed to Lewis, nor as engaged in negating the possibility of homosexuality as Shibanoff has argued.

³³ Simon Gaunt, "Bel Acueil and the Improper Allegory of the Romance of the Rose" *New Medieval Literatures*, 2 (1998): 65-93, p. 91.

³⁴Linguistic arguments queering the *Rose* have been advanced as well, as when Ellen Friedrich undertook a philological examination of the allegory's language of desire, finding that words like the Rose's fiercely desired "bud" ("bouton") was medieval French slang for "penis," among a number of examples drawn from close examination of the poem's word choice. Ellen L. Friedrich "What Rose is not a Rose" in *Gender Transgressions: Crossing the Normative Barrier in Old French Literature* ed. Karen J. Taylor New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1998

The gift of Jean de Meun's *Rose* as a continuation of Guillaume de Lorris' *Rose* is a gift of preservation after death, explicitly thematized in a passage that evokes Guillaume and offers love to him. If, inside the story, the lover is seeking to free Bel Acueill, and if this might be read (through iconographic (Gaunt) or linguistic (Friedrich) research) as the presence of homoerotic themes in the *Rose*, the congruent and symmetrical action in the story's frame is that of Jean de Meun extending Guillaume's work and life. This interpretation seems possible in part because, as the close reading of a telling passage will show, this action is thematized *within* the romance's narrative *as* an act of love. Rather than insisting on a single interpretation of the allegory, I argue that, with the *Roman de la Rose*, we are taught to be suspicious and to step outside of a network where women are exchanged. Once outside that network, we find ourselves drawn into a different system, one where romance takes the form of the exchange of texts.

II: Love and the Gift in the *Roman de la Rose*

The *Roman de la Rose's* narrative allegory of love-instruction, primarily a narrative of a love-quest, is moved along, to a large extent, by the queerness of its gift economy. The text is made up almost entirely of

speeches of advice to the lover offered by various allegorical characters, and virtually each of these ruminates on the dangers of the gift economy. These dangers are many: giving too little and failing in courtliness; giving too much, and bankrupting oneself as well as purchasing a love that ought to be given; giving ("don") and receiving something other than love as counter-gift ("guerredon"). Love and courtship are placed within an economics of imprecision despite the desire of all concerned for exact recompense.³⁵

³⁵ Examples of discussions of the problem of the gift (and the related problem of the loan) appear throughout the text. See, for instance, lines 2241-22621 in Guillaume's section, the commandments of the God of Love include an injunction to *give* rather than *lend*. In Jean de Meun's section, see lines 4533-4600, where Reason discusses how good women do not surrender for the sake of a gift since "bone amor doit de fin queur nester;/don n'en doivent pas ester mestre/ne quell font corporel soulaz" or "true love ought to be born of a true heart; it ought not to be ruled by gifts any more than by bodily pleasures (Lecoy, 4567-4569, Horgan, 70). In the discourse of "Friend," there is a long section inveigling against overgenerous gifts, lest their giver be mistaken for soliciting something like prostitution on the part of the beloved. As a final – but vast -- example, a large portion of the discourse of the Old Woman is devoted to the power of women on the market and the dangers of attempting to buy their favors; there is a passage where the Old Woman argues that women have to guard themselves in their material helplessness by making sure to have many lovers. After a comparison to toll-collecting, she states that: "tout ainsic est de la fame/que de touz les marchiez est dame/que chascun fet por lui avoir: prendre doit par tout de l'avoir"; in English, "it is just the same for a woman, for she is the mistress of all the bargaining in which men engage in order to have her; she ought to take from everyone." (Lecoy, 13123-13126; Horgan p. 202-203). Dahlberg's translation of the same passage is less accurate but more beautiful: "woman...is the mistress of all the markets, since everyone works to have her. She should take possessions everywhere." (Charles Dahlberg, trans., *The Romance of the Rose* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 3rd edition, 1995):227. These are just several of the many discussions of women as good s on a market of courtly love, to whom gifts must be given but whose favors must never seem to have been purchased. The most pointed of these discussions will be analyzed at length below. None of these characters, incidentally, are necessarily giving "correct" or "moral" advice to Amanz; they are, however, terribly repetitive in their congruent concerns about excessive *don* and improper *guerredon*, and examples of this concern could be multiplied far beyond those offered above.

The theory of the gift that emerges from the endless and virtually unvaried return to *don/querredon* echoes the theories about the exchange of women offered by Claude Levi-Strauss and the corpus of feminist criticism that followed it.³⁶ The most recent and magisterial writing on the gift takes from the anthropological, literary and feminist criticisms of exchange, and turns the economics of the gift into an ethics: this is the work of Jacques Derrida, particularly his text titled *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*. In this book, Derrida argues that the gift must be un-economic to be truly gift-like, that the act of giving is constitutive of the giving subject in particular ways, and that the gift is in complex and important ways *always* a gift *of* time. At times, these arguments have more in common with the *Roman de la Rose* and its troubled gift

³⁶Claude Levi-Strauss *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*. trans. James Harle Bell, John Richard Von Sturmer and Rodney Needham (Boston: Beacon Press. 1969). First published as *Les Structures élémentaires de la Parenté*, 1949, revised 1967); See also the significant theoretical work of Mauss, upon which some of Levi-Strauss' thinking is based, in Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*. trans. W. D. Halls (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990). First published as *Essai sur le Don*, Presses Universitaires de France, 1950. The most significant and canonical feminist articles responding to Levi-Strauss are some of the essays in Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, trans. Catherine Porter with Carolyn Burke (Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 1985). First published as *Ce Sexe qui n'en est pas un*, (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1977); and, particularly, Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the "Political Economy" of Sex" which first appeared in *Towards an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Reyna Rapp Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976). For another consideration of gender and the problem of exchange, see Marilyn Strathern's *The Gender of the Gift* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) esp. p. 143-159 and 219-224.

economy than with most of the extant anthropological literature to which it forms a commentary and continuation.³⁷

Both of *Rose's* authors create characters that express the fear that women, insofar as they are "goods on the market," will (to borrow a phrase from Luce Irigaray) go to market for themselves, causing the deliberately, agonizingly imprecise economy of gift-exchange to verge on the price-precision of prostitution. According to these speakers, unfaithful women create networks of exchange where men are sharing women with men whom they don't want to be connected to. That, and not a lack of chastity in and of itself, seems to be at the root of the fear of women expressed in the text. Of course, it's highly likely (based on the influence of the Latin philosophical and allegorical traditions on Jean de Meun's and, to a somewhat lesser degree, since he cited only Macrobius directly, on Guillaume de Lorris' sections) that both of the *Rose's* authors received clerkly educations, and, in the process, were (at least partially) sheltered from contact with women. What is available to students of such schools might best be described as a "homosocial imaginary": a discourse of

³⁷Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*. trans. Peggy Kamuf. 1992, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. First published as *Donner le temps* (Paris: Editions Galilée, 1991).

learned misogyny, bred in environments where bonds between men are the only legitimate ones.

In the *Roman de la Rose*, this imaginary intersects with the compulsory heterosexuality of the discourse of courtly love. In this encounter, the homosocial imaginary brushes up against homosexual panic, since, in the *Rose*, pollution is imagined as contact with another male through the medium of women's infidelity. In the speech by the God of Love/Amors, that forms the midpoint and keystone of Jean de Meun's continuation and the locus of his rhetoric of mourning, the God worries over imaginary Breton, English or Roman foreigners who might enter the network at some undesired and undesirable point, touching French men through dalliance with French women.

Half-way through Jean de Meun's continuation of the *Roman de la Rose*, in the interstice between the two long and philosophically rich speeches by Amis and Fals Semblant, the lover is helped by Amors, the God of Love. Amors assembles an army on the lover's behalf, intending to help the lover vanquish Jalousie, who is keeping Bel Acueill (the lady's "Fair Welcome") imprisoned. His speech to his army, although in the interstices between major sections, takes place in the exact center of the

conjoined *Rose*,³⁸ of Guillaume de Lorris' and Jean de Meun's sections put together. This speech is, thereby, physically at the romance's center while remaining somewhat marginal.

This speech performs a number of significant moves within the text. As will be discussed at length in the following section, Amors' speech includes the digression that establishes Jean de Meun as the continuator of the *Roman de la Rose*. In the main part of the speech, Amors draws a comparison between conquest by Love/Amors and conquest by purchase or desire, represented by Venus and her "market" of desire. This comparison ultimately collapses into a description and indictment of heterosexual romance, as Amors likens the exchange of love and desire to the purchase of a horse and the obligations incurred thereof. Amors suggests that buying a horse is the superior and wiser act. After all, the buyer, by paying money in exchange for the subrational animal, incurs no obligation and owes no countergift beyond the hundred *livres* of purchase price:

³⁸In David Hult's *Self-Fulfilling Prophecies*, he credits Daniel Poirion in his *Roman de la Rose* (Paris: 1973) with first making this observation.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Qui achate un destrier c livres, | If someone buys a horse for a hundred |
| pait les, si en sera delivres; | pounds, let him pay the money ad so |
| n'en doit plus riens au marcheant, | his debt is discharged; he owes |
| ne cil ne l'en redoit neant. | nothing more to the merchant and the |
| Je n'apele pas vente don: | merchant owes nothing to him. I do |
| vente ne doit nul guerredon, | not call a sale a gift: no recompense is |
| n'i affiert graces ne merites, | necessary for a sale and no favor or |
| l'un de l'autre se part tout quites. | merit is involved; both parties are free |
| (Lecoy, lines 10745-10752) | from obligation when they |
| | separate...(Horgan, trans. p. 165) |

This analogy contains two terms (horse, woman) whose similarity is being offered beyond its value as mere clarification of structural relationships.

The equation "horse=woman" is developed when Amors specifies the distinction between (sale) *vente* and (gift) *don*, and is fully understandable as a comparison to the traffic in women when it is made clear that if horse does not please its new owner, it can be resold, in whole or in parts, but even if driven to resell the horse in parts, the buyer's own self is not threatened by the economic exchange: "au mains ne peut il pas tout perdre." (Lecoy, 10757) ("at the very least he cannot lose everything")

Horgan, p.165). The threat of the loss of self through love is the threat (and perhaps also the promise) of the *don*, the threat that does not appear in the comparatively simpler and more sordid scene of the *vente*.

If the horse owner holds the horse dear, he will be able to master and control it, the God of Love argues: "s'il a si le cheval chier/qu'il le gart por son chevauchier,/ tourjorz iert il du cheval sires." (Lecoy, 10761-3) ("If he was so fond of the horse that he kept it to ride, he would still be the horse's master." Horgan, p. 165). By contrast, women, who might *also* be kept for a kind of riding, may cause their "owners" trouble by incurring a debt demanding *guerredon* and relation. That relation would merely be the formation of family bonds and debts, if kinship worked in this poem only in a Levi-Straussian mode. However, here it seems that unfaithful women might *also* cause trouble by refusing to grant the man the sovereignty that the horse always already has granted, might fill the structural ties of kinship with a content of their own.

The relation incurred by *don/guerredon* might, the God of Love worries, be a relation with the woman herself as an agent in her own "sale." This difference between twentieth-century and twelfth-century "theories" of the gift is important, and it might be useful to wonder how

new readings of Levi-Strauss might be changed and broadened if one takes the *Roman de la Rose* into account.

In the passage of analogy between horse-sale and the exchange of women, the risks for the buyer include the threat of losing sovereignty (*seignorie*) over the bought; the possibility of losing everything in the buying (*Fole Largece*); the difficulty of a woman staying bought once purchased; and the threat of cuckoldry by foreign blood or *estranges*. Venus and Amors have a division of labor in place where sex (Venus), is possible and perhaps even relatively easy without love (Amors). The economy of Venus seems to have the simplicity of the horse-market to which it is analogized. However, as the digression develops (as Jean de Meun's digressions are wont to do), the dichotomy which was set up between Venus (buy and sell) and Amors (gift/countergift, *don/guerredon*), dissolves, and all matters of exchange between men and women become open to the possibility that the man will lose himself, giving to the woman who gets to both sell and keep ("L'avoir, le pris a li vendierres/si que tout pert li achetierres" Lecoy, 10769-70) (The seller has both the goods and the price of them" Horgan, p.166), this time commenting on what a woman's putative sexual "surrender" refuses to give up.

In these passages, the fear seems to be that the *guerredon* will not be *don*-like in that it will not take away from the woman. *This* matrix of surrender and refusal seems to describe all love and sex exchange in the poem's heterosexual economy. Heterosexual exchange, in the *Roman de la Rose*, is the most problematic relation imaginable, and it is a marvel that anyone manages to negotiate its briars and high-walled castles at all.

The fear that the gift might unethically purchase favor (when a counter-gift is extended) and that giving is thereby marred with an economics both base and dangerous, is passionately reiterated throughout the *Roman de la Rose*. This concern with the ethics of the gift is one to which twentieth-century theorists of the gift, from Marcel Mauss to Jacques Derrida, have also granted fruitful consideration.

In part, the ethics of gift and counter-gift have always been worked through by theorizing the relationship between the gift and time. Mauss, for one, has a great deal to say about how the gift economies that his anthropological research describes demanded a certain *rhythm* of gift-giving, that the gift could not be counter-gifted immediately and still remain gift-like. Jacques Derrida, in his re-reading of Mauss' classic *The Gift* in *Given Time*, relates the gift, instead, to *giving* time. "The thing must not be restituted *immediately and right away*. There must be time, it

must last, there must be waiting – without forgetting...”³⁹ he writes.

Derrida describes the time-structure of gift-giving here as the time of a sort of conscience.⁴⁰ This would not be unlike the structure of feudal relations, where vassals and lords are pledged to remember debts owed. In his normative (as opposed to descriptive) mode, Derrida argues that the gift *must* be un-economic to be truly gift-like, that it must be taken off the market instead of theorized as the market’s foundation.

The time that Derrida describes as being required for the gift to deserve its ontological status *as* gift is *also* the required time of mourning for lost loved objects (for the passage of time itself, perhaps, another recurrent concern of the *Roman de la Rose*). The cadence, the rhythm of the gift in Derrida’s work keeps to a certain measure, produces a sort of time, a time of waiting before offering *guerredon*, the waiting that indicates that one’s love has not been purchased. The language of time and of cadence and rhythm may be said to evoke, as well, a particular kind of narrative, a particular means of expressing time: this ordered sequence

³⁹Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*, 41

⁴⁰Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*, 41. Nietzsche’s animals with the right to make promises come strongly to mind, as these sovereign subjects learned in proper forgetfulness would also be likely to be properly memorious givers – and counter-givers– of gifts. Derrida relies on the somewhat medieval (or perhaps simply French) manner of crafting his argument from, around and through a tissue of citations – much as de Meun incorporates translated passages from Alan de Lille or Boethius – without offering footnotes or markers that would help explicate what his argument is based on.

evokes the time of poetry. In the *Roman de la Rose*, this time of poetry is also the erotics of courtship, the rhythm of hesitation and delay embedded in the dance of courtly love.

Derrida, in *Given Time*, renders explicit something that is absent in previous theories of gift exchange, something that is occluded but significant in the *Roman de la Rose*: the connection between the necessary time gap between gift and counter-gift and the manner in which this gift structure resembles that of narrative, with its necessary sequentiality. The demanded gift of time is also the required time for mourning, perhaps in elegiac poetry, for lost loved objects (for the passage of a time that changes both us and our love, and ultimately brings death). If what one gives when one gives ethically is time, the gift of poetry is the most appropriate of gifts, Derrida's text suggests.

The advisors to the lover in the *Roman de la Rose* often return to the concern that giving to the beloved can grow unbalanced or excessive, somehow undergoing metamorphosis from the worshipful subjection of love into the unacceptable register of purchase. The roles of the gift in this text, although multiple, circle back endlessly to the problem of women's faithfulness within a market that can be described without anachronism as "a traffic in women." The trouble with heterosexuality, in

the *Rose*, is the economy of the gift, the necessity to balance so delicately between too much and too little, the possibility that it is impossible to give in an ethical manner.

My discussion of the persistent problematic of the gift will now turn to a particularly illuminating instance of an *alternative* which the *Roman de la Rose* seems to offer to the troubling heterosexual economy it thematizes again and again as so very problematic. This alternative can be called several things: the gift of mourning, the gift of narrative, the gift of time between men. However it is named, this mechanism functions in the poem and functions in a unique way among the repetitions of the heterosexual don/guerredon problem which each speaker (from the first speech of Amors, still in Guillaume de Lorris' section, to the Old Woman, who is encountered near the end of the lover's quest) takes up in a similar way. That instance is one where the worrying about the gift exceeds its role as a symptom of the problems inherent in heterosexual romance and becomes, as I shall explain, a part of the story that the *Roman de la Rose* tells of how it came to be written.

What follows is a reading in which I find, embedded in Jean de Meun's continuation of the *Rose*, a relation to Guillaume de Lorris, who began it but died before completing it. This self-conscious moment in the

text is an instance of the *poem* as gift, and as the occasion of a certain mourning which, as I shall argue, is a queer sort of mourning, indeed.

III A Society of Dead Poets

In a speech to his army, Amors (Love, referred to for clarity's sake in most translations as the God of Love) speaks of the enemy his army will soon be fighting, Jealousy, of how she robs him of his greatest bards. The speech of Amors, the very speech that contains the comparison between the horse sale and marriage, moves topically from war to mourning, from mourning to love, and from love to the horse-sale theory of gift exchange. Yet here, the impossible economies of heterosexual gift exchange are connected to an additional problematic: to the poem's genesis and to an alternative form of giving the gift. Instead of offering a rousing military cheer, Amors begins to urge his generals — Noblece de Queur (Nobility of Heart), Pitiez (Pity), Pacience (Patience) as well as Faus Semblant (False Seeming) — onward into battle by confessing how sorrowful he, the God of Love, has been about the imprisonment of Bel Acueill (Fair Welcome).

The achievement of the lover's quest hinges on his freeing and achieving union with this aspect of the Rose, whose male gender has given some critics so much food for thought and investigation. Amors

compares his sadness about the imprisonment of this allegorical personage, this subset of the Rose's psyche, in a complicated hypothetical statement: without Bel Acueill he *would be* as lost as he actually *is* lost without Tibullus, the singer of elegies.

| | |
|---|--|
| S'il n'en ist, je suis maubailliz, | If he does not escape, I will be |
| puis que Tibullus m'est failliz, | wretched, for Tibullus is gone, who |
| qui connosset si bien mes teiches, | understood my nature so well, and at |
| por cui mort je brisai mes fleiches (...) | whose death I broke my arrows, |
| en noz pleurs n'ot ne frains ne brides. | snapped my bows, and let my torn |
| Gallus, Catillus et Ovides, | quivers trail on the ground (...) our |
| qui bien sorent d'amors trestier, | grief was unrestrained and unbridled. |
| nous reussent or bien mestrier: | Gallus, Catullus, and Ovid, who were |
| mes chascuns d'aus gist morz porriz | skilled in writing about love, would |
| Vez ci Guillaume de Lorris, | have been very useful to us then, but |
| cui Jalousie, sa contraire, | each of them is dead and decayed. |
| fet tant d'angoisse et de deul traire | Here is Guillaume de Lorris, whose |
| qu'il est en perill de morir, | enemy, Jealousy, causes him such grief |
| se je ne pens du secorir. | and torment that he is in danger of |

(Lecoy, 10477-10500, absent 10481-10491) dying if I do not see about saving him.
(Horgan, p. 161-2)

This discussion of Tibullus (who has not previously figured as a character in the poem and does not return after this moment) is a citation from Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* (III, IX)⁴¹ (another poem where falling in love is a pretext for writing much unrelated historical and philosophical rumination.). In this complex and remarkably original passage, de Meun

⁴¹Ovid's *Amores* is also to be a poem thematizing the falling in love which leads to a poem being written. Specifically, in Book III, Ovid deviates from talking about Love upon meeting up with Tragedy and Elegy in a grove – it is in this section that Tibullus, an elegist, is discussed. The French of de Meun is fairly close to the Latin of Ovid in this passage, although the comparison afterwards is to the death of Aeneas, not to the plight of Guillaume. See Ovid's "Amores" :

"Ecce, puer Veneris fert eversamque pharetram
et fractos arcus et sine luce facem;
adspice, demissis ut eat miserabilis alis
pectoraque infesta tundat aperta manu!
excipiunt lacrimas sparsi per colla capilli,
oraeque singultu concutiente sonant.
fratris in Aeneae sic illum funere dicunt
egressum tectis, pulcher lule, tuis;
nec minus est confusa venus moriente tibullo,
quam iuveni rupit cum ferus inguen aper.
at sacri vates et divum cura vocamur;
sunt etiam qui nos numen habere putent.

(lines 6-18) "See, the child of Venus comes, with quiver reversed, with bows broken, and lightless wings, how he beats his bared breast with hostile hand! His tears are caught by the locks hanging scattered about his neck, and from his lips comes the sound of shaking sobs. In such plight, they say, he was at Aeneas his brother's laying away, when he came forth of thy dwelling, fair Iulus; nor was Venus' heart less wrought when Tibullus died than when the fierce boar crushed the groin of the youth she loved. Yes, we bards are called sacred, and the care of the gods; there are those who even think we have the god within. In *Ovid in Six Volumes, Vol. I Heroides and Amores*, trans. Grant Showerman Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1977): 487.

nevertheless does not, at least at first, deviate by very much from Ovid's, which mourns the passing of Tibullus the singer. Ovid's Cupid mourns the death of Tibullus, permitting Ovid to insist on how much Love must value its bards, a company that includes the mourned Tibullus and the author, Ovid. The passage offers a model for Jean de Meun's rhetoric of mourning, although Jean de Meun makes it clear that he is doing Ovid one better by actually continuing the text of a mourned, dead poet.⁴²

⁴² Peter Allen discusses this passage at some length in his *The Art of Love: Amatory Fiction from Ovid to the Romance of the Rose* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992). As I discussed above (see endnote 15), Allen understands Jean de Meun's continuation as a violent act of superseding his predecessor-authors. In his discussion of Jean and Ovid, he writes "Jean is not content simply to ignore his auctor; instead, he kicks him out of the way" (81) explaining that the lamentation of the God of Love "kills off" all of Jean's fellow-authors, leaving Jean de Meun alone on the field of presumed battle. "The God of Love appears to honor Ovid by paraphrasing his verse. Yet the lines he cites...sound more like a eulogy than an encomium" writes Allen (Allen, 82), and goes on to cite the passage quoted above. The decision that the God of Love merely *appears* to be honoring Ovid seems to have been prompted, at least in part, by Allen's reading of the end-rhymes of lines 10495 and 10496, above, "porriz" and "de Lorriz" arguing that they "undercut" the God of Love's "polite thoughts about rescuing the imperiled Guillaume" because the end-rhyme "makes it clear that Guillaume is already in a state of decay." (Allen, 82). Another possibility that might be offered for understanding the might be to see this rhyme as a means of underlining the pathos of Guillaume de Lorriz' death, since this is the section of the poem where the fact that Guillaume de Lorriz *must* have died long ago is most clearly underlined. Allen concentrates on the competitive aspect of the act of continuation, the way in which it might be an impure gift, while I, in this article, have focused on the ways in which competition yields to comradeship in the rhetoric of the poem and its figuration of a queer economy of mourning. Gaunt has also discussed the "de Lorriz" "porriz" rhyme, in a description of the God of Love's speech that emphasizes the way in which "Guillaume owes his identity to Jean, who presents himself as his predecessor's savior" Simon Gaunt, *Retelling the Tale: An Introduction to Medieval French Literature* (London: Duckworth, 2001):104. Gaunt discusses the relationship between the authors in terms of Freud's "account of the murder of the authoritarian father by his jealous sons...it is the act of murder that itself creates the *father figure*" (Gaunt, 106). However, lest Guillaume de Lorriz be read too much as the victim of author-murder, Gaunt goes on to note that his beginning shapes Jean de Meun's continuation (in a process of mourning that is precisely *not* one of interiorization) and

By invoking Ovid and paying him homage, this passage demonstrates epigonal relationships in an additional, more conventional way. Worshipful, respectful, the vernacular author takes up the matter discussed by Ovid and alters it for his own purposes, which include extolling vernacular authorship. By also relying on this conventional relationship, the text highlights the oddness of the radically *different* relationship to one's predecessor poet that it includes, in the passage that follows. In Ovid's text, the personage of Cupid passionately but passively pays mourning homage to Tibullus. Amors pays homage to Guillaume de Lorris but he shifts out of the mode of mourning and into a mode of rescue. Amors' speech moves, from its Ovidian beginnings, into a concern with the plight of the two authors, the one who quests and the one who gives life.

Jean de Meun's Amors mourns Ovid's Tibullus, detailing his sorrow at some length. In the narrative, this last round of mourning, this most recent encounter with loss, seems to have rendered Amors incapable of action. His bow and arrow broken, he cannot, presumably, act to cause

that the poem's title is Guillaume's, not Jean's. Gaunt proceeds to note that "the effect of the passage about the two authors of the Rose is that both Guillaume and Jean on one level are figures in the text not unlike the allegorical figures that people the landscape of the allegorical garden." (Gaunt, 105). Perhaps that figuration merely disguises what might be the "actual" impurity of Jean de Meun's gift, but the fact that it is disguised as queer romance seems a significant one.

new romances; more significantly, having already broken the paraphernalia of his trade, Amors implies that he has nothing more to break, no further mourning to do, and that therefore he is asking to be saved from grieving once more.

Jean de Meun, in a moment of rhetorically magnified grief, *cites* Ovid. In that moment of citation, he also *includes* Ovid, listing him with the other dead yet immortal authors that vernacular literature, with its aggressively post-lapsarian stance, mourns and memorializes. He includes himself in the pantheon with Ovid in a manner that apes Ovid's, who, after all, had placed himself next to Tibullus as one of the poets whose passing Love must mourn. In a way, this imitation of imitation is a conventional relationship between authors in the medieval present tense and their predecessors. Often, this rhetoric includes a monumentalization that – usually *more* than de Meun does here – discusses vernacular authorship by pretending to apologize for the present's existence at the expense of valorizing the past all the more highly.

Yet, something other than a conventional relationship with an *auctor* is occurring in the passage, a second layer of meaning is emerging in the allegory: the lover, previously yet another allegorical personage known entirely through his function, is *named*. Amors tells his war council

to look, here, at the suffering visage of none other than Guillaume de Lorris.⁴³ The “Vez ci” that precedes his naming (Lecoy, line 10496, above) seems to indicate that the figure to which I have been referring as “the lover” ought simply be called “Guillaume.” There are precedents in medieval literature for including one’s own self in the narrative, but this is usually figured through relations of patronage or, at times, as an appeal or a rejection of the figure of the author as courtly lover (as Chaucer does in most of his writings).⁴⁴ The closest analogue to the process being enacted in this passage, however, might be the *Divine Comedy*, where Dante maintains in life several of those he claims to have loved and hated (but

⁴³According to Sylvia Huot, Roger Dragonetti in *Le Mirage Des Sources: L’Art Du Faux Dans Le Roman Médiéval* (Paris: Seuil, 1987) suggested that Guillaume de Lorris was a “fiction devised by Jean de Meun” in Sylvia Huot, ‘*The Romance of the Rose*’ and its *Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) : 2. David Hult, in his *Self-Fulfilling Prophecies*, has also made this suggestion – less to argue that Guillaume de Lorris was actually a fiction than to think through the implications of such that such a speculation suggests.

⁴⁴ Douglas Kelly discusses how “generally speaking, the first author was a major figure in the medieval approach to rewriting.”(23). The examples he cites are of an anonymous author of a version of the story of the Trojan War, who gives all credit to Dares, and Joseph of Exeter, and Benoit de Saint Maure’s *Roman de Troie*. See Douglas Kelly, *Internal Difference and Meanings in the Roman de la Rose* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), especially p. 23-24. See also Douglas Kelly’s *The Conspiracy of Allusion: Description, Rewriting and Authorshp from Macrobius to Medieval Romance* (Koln: Brill, 1999). There, he describes what he refers to as “the grand tradition from Macrobius to Chrétien de Troyes, a tradition in which authors imitate one another’s works such that the rewriting appears to be original” (223) and, in the concluding chapter of the same work, notes that “medieval practice stressed original rewriting of canonical works over writing of new material” (258). Kelly connects this observation with one current of medieval thought, the neo-Platonic understanding of creative art as an inadequate imitation of divine creation.

without narratively singling out a sole person for continued life and questing *in life*). However, Dante's rhetoric of letting a voice continue to speak beyond the grave is less concerned with literary succession, is less of a romance with (and parasitism on) a predecessor author.

According to Jean de Meun, Guillaume de Lorris wrote the first section, about four thousand lines, of the *Roman de la Rose*. As one commonly tells students, this would be the equivalent of about fifty pages of a standard printed book. According to Amors, the continuation by Jean de Meun, five times as long, was commenced forty years after Guillaume de Lorris's death. But, of course, the speaking Amors is a product of Jean de Meun's imagination. David Hult in his *Self-Fulfilling Prophecies* proposes a theoretical fiction in which de Meun actually *invents* Guillaume de Lorris as a sort of metaphor and as a means of talking about "literary succession" as well as baiting the reader.⁴⁵ It is extremely unlikely that the text's two authors could have had an acquaintance in the flesh. Yet, rather than allowing the lover to remain historically unmoored, a merely allegorical figure that could be anybody, or who could stand in for both

⁴⁵ David Hult goes on to show that such a reading can only be a fiction – marshaling a wealth of evidence that de Lorris' text existed on its own prior to de Meun's continuation – the theoretical conceit is a useful one, highlighting just the oddness of the text and the unprecedented nature of Amors' discussion of authorship.

authors, Jean de Meun has Amors motivate his generals with the worry that a literal Guillaume de Lorris might come to some harm.⁴⁶

To continue the work of another, is this not also a gift? Is not the amplification involved in writing the *Roman de la Rose* not a gift of time, in the way Derrida writes of gifts being related to time and to *giving* time? Perhaps we can say that this exchange (this exchange of text, this presentation of time) is a queer alternative to the heterosexual exchange that has been so clearly problematized in this poem. As Amors mourns the possible yet always-already demise of Guillaume de Lorris, we might ask whether such a mourning, while not necessarily "homosexual," while not "homosocial" in the fairly limited sense that has been adduced of Victorian literature, is where Jean de Meun represents a mourning and a romance that is somehow queer.

The speech that Amors offers his generals as part of a warlike rhetoric of persuasion rests entirely on the pathos of fearing the consequences that would result from inaction. Guillaume, says Amors, is

⁴⁶Some of the rich issues in thinking about allegory come to light right in this sentence. A personage without a name, characterized by function ("Fair Welcome") is *merely* allegorical – a character with a given name gets to be "real" even if we know very little about him besides, as is indicated by Guillaume's name, the region that he comes from. Thus, someone named "the Miller" represents the behaviors of that type in a quasi-allegorical mode, while somebody named "William Miller" may have been a "real" living person, one whose presence can be mourned and whose immortal soul might deserve the commemoration of prayer.

in danger of dying if Bel Acueill is not rescued for him. He, Guillaume, has given to Love loyal service, indeed service so loyal that he has even begun to write a romance where (like a latter-day Moses) he sets down Love's commandments.

Er plus oncor me doit servir,
car por ma grace deservir,
doit il conmancier le romant
ou seront mis tuit mi conmant,
et jusque la le fornira
ou il a Bel Acueilll dira,
qui languist ore en la prison
par douleur et par mesprison:
"Mout sui durement esmaiez
que entroubliez ne m'aiez,
si n'ai deul et desconfort,
ja mes n'iert riens qui me confort
se je per vostre bienveillance,
car je n'ai mes aillieurs fiance."
Ci se reposera Guillaumes,

And he must serve me still further, for
in order to deserve my favor, he must
begin the romance that will contain all
my commandments and he will
continue it to the point where he will
say to Fair Welcome, now languishing
unjustly and sorrowfully in prison: "I
am dreadfully afraid lest you have
forgotten me and so I am in pain and
in distress. Nothing will ever bring me
comfort if I lose your favor, for I have
no confidence in anyone else." (NB:
this is the actual citation from end of
the de Lorris section)

| | |
|---|--|
| cui li tombleaus soit pleins de baumes, | Here Guillaume will rest. May his tomb |
| d'encens, de mirre, et d'aloé | be filled with balm and incense, myrrh |
| tant m'a servi, tant m'a loé. (Lecoy, | and aloes, for he has served and |
| 10517-10534) | praised me well. |
| (Horgan, p. 162) | |

Here, Amors cites the precise last line of Guillaume's portion of the *Rose*, and prays for that Guillaume's tomb be comfortable. Thus we know in advance that *even if* we go to battle for Guillaume's love (which is, after all, what Amors' speech is ostensibly encouraging), he will *actually* perish at a future time that is already set. In fact, the moment in time when Guillaume will perish has already been represented, it exists as a particular line of text, a line we read and passed over many pages (and therefore, several hours) ago. He will perish before writing one line more than "se e pert vostre bienveillance,/car je n'ai mes aillors fiance...." (Lecoy, 4027-8 and 10529-10530) ("if I lose your favor, for I have no confidence in anyone else..." Horgan, p.61 and p.162).⁴⁷

⁴⁷Hult has an interesting discussion of the paradox produced by this mixing of levels and times, and the effect is has of dis-unifying the narratorial voice in Chapter 1, particularly, *Self-Fulfilling Prophecies*: 10-14. He reads Amors' speech as producing "a floating fictional boundary...[which] should lead us to see, in fact, that it governs two epistemological levels that deserve to be maintained as distinct. Amors' speech functions simultaneously as a poetic element interior to Jean de Meun's work and as an exterior agent of textual designation and delimitation...'Guillaume de Lorris' refers both to a person and a text" (Ibid., 100-101).

Having mixed the narrative's diagetic future with what is in the past of the reader's reception, Amors proceeds to promise us that, after Guillaume's death, Jean de Meun (here referred to as Jean Chopinel) shall be born. He shall serve Amors, and shall value the romance so dearly ("si chier"), and will want to much for its meaning to be clear, that he will finish it. The "si chier" (line 10554) invokes once again the language of value and exchange that has saturated the poem. In fact, it can be fruitfully compared to the invocation of valuing "le cheval chier" (line 10761) just a few hundred lines following, the horse over which the owner might retain mastery, by implicit contrast with a woman, whom the man cannot hope to master and to whom he might lose his own self. To value the romance dearly is to continue it, to give it time

Everything that is predicated of Jean is spoken as happening in the future, and Amors insists on the fact that, even as he praises Jean, he is praising someone who at this diagetic moment has not yet been born – indeed, he asks his lords to pray for Jean's safe birth.

Puis vendra Johans Chopinel,
au cuer jolif, au cors inel,
qui nestra seur Laire a Meun,

Then will come Jean Chopinel, gay in
heart and alert in body, who will be
born in Meung-sur-Loire and will serve

qui a saoul et a geun
 me servira toute sa vie,
 sans avarice et sanz envie (...)
 Cist avra le romanz si chier
 qu'il le voudra tout parfenir,
 se tens et leus l'en peut venir,
 car quant Guillaumes cessera,
 Jehans le continuera,
 enprés sa mort, que je ne mante,
 anz trespassez plus de XL,
 et dira por la mescheance,
 par poor de desesperance
 qu'il n'ai de Bel Acueilll perdue
 la bienvoillance avant eue:
 "Et si l'ai je perdue, espoir,
 a poi que ne m'en desespoir."
 (Lecoy, 10535-10567, absent 10540-
 10554)

me, feasting and fasting, his whole life
 long, without avarice or envy (...) This
 romance will be so dear to him that he
 will want to complete it, if he has
 sufficient time and opportunity, for
 where Guillaume stops, Jean will
 continue, more than forty years after
 his death, and that is no lie. Full of
 fear and despair lest, as a result of the
 misfortune I have described, he
 should have lost the goodwill of Fair
 Welcome that he had before, he will
 say: "And perhaps I have lost it; I am
 on the brink of despair." (NB: this last
 sentence in quotation marks is the first
 line of de Meun continuation)
 Horgan, p. 162-3

Something new is happening in Amors' speech, which begins with the death of one poet and continues towards the projected birth of another (and concludes, some many lines later, with a discussion of heterosexual love's economics). Already present in the discourse of the *Rose*, and specifically present in Amors' discourse, are two forms of exchange: one between women and men (often *really* about the relationships between men and anxiety about unruly women who might disrupt these), and another form, one that takes place explicitly between men, without women present. In the *Rose*, this second form of exchange is produced through the joint writing of a poem about the first form of exchange. This second form of exchange is one that concerns itself with a sort of mourning, with giving the gift of additional time to an admired poet, long dead. This gift represents a mourning for someone impossible — a queer sort of love between men. This romance and mourning works as an alternative to the troubled economy of heterosexual exchange, a way of expressing tenderness and devotion that suggests the importance (without naming any set of defining practices) of same-sex bonds. While this may be implicit, appearing as the relationship between authors in any number of medieval texts, Jean de Meun's *Roman de la Rose* is a text that

renders the queer homoerotics (or, at least, the same-sex romance) of this relationship explicit.⁴⁸

In the words of Bernard of Chartres, the later author stands on the shoulder of his predecessor giants. This dictum refers to later Latin writings which relies on classical models. Jean de Meun is amplifying and commenting upon a work by another *vernacular* author, and an author whose authority amounts to more or less the same as his own.

Commentary implies a text that is closed and sealed, like the *Roman de la Rose* itself (which "encloses," as we recall from Guillaume de Lorris'

⁴⁸ In her in ' *The Romance of the Rose' and its Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), Sylvia Huot discusses the reception of the *Roman de la Rose* in part through examining the work of those who revised it according to their own aesthetic and moral preferences. One of the poem's *remaineurs*, Gui de Mori, inserts himself into the God of Love's speech in Jean de Meun's continuation (discussed in sections II and III of the present article) as a third author of the *Rose*. In the context of this argument, the fact that the God of Love's speech and the structure of the poem as a whole leaves open the space for such an insertion indicates the radical openness of the *Rose* as text. Gui de Mori's self-portrait is discussed by Huot on pages 89-93 of her book. It has been edited in Langlois, "Gui de Mori et le Roman de la Rose," in *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartres*, 68 (1907): 249-71 and discussed at some length in David Hult's *Self-Fulfilling Prophecies: Readership and Authority in the First 'Roman de la Rose'* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986), pages 34-64. There were others reworking the *Roman de la Rose* in the Middle Ages; Huot discusses a family of manuscripts attributed to the "*Bremanieur*," who "sought to remove discrepancies between the two parts of the conjoined *Rose*...[and] modified or deleted the poem's ore salacious passages." (131). It is interesting to note that *this* version of the poem actually *deletes* the discussion of the poem's authors in the God of Love's speech, and "the *Rose* is presented as though it were the work of a single anonymous author" (133). Those who rewrote and re-edited the *Rose* in the Middle Ages seem to have formed their own relationships to the queerness of poem's figuration of mournful authorship, but none of these interventions proved sufficiently influential to displace the dyad of Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun in cultural memory (the poem is not known as a work authored by de Lorris, de Meun and de Mori, for instance).

opening lines, the entire art of love). Amplification, by contrast, and particularly amplification on de Meun's scale, differs from commentary in that it makes a radical intervention in the text, opening it up, demolishing its previous boundaries. In the process, the Guillaume de Lorris portion is transformed from a whole (albeit an unfinished whole) into the fragment of something larger than itself.

The medieval exegete extends the lives of previous scholars, continuing to argue with them in commentary form. Jean de Meun goes further than commentary and into the realm of extensive *amplificatio*: he continues Guillaume de Lorris' work,⁴⁹ lets Guillaume de Lorris live longer, and he lets Guillaume's text come to be worth more. This, more than anything, is undoubtedly an instance of "giving time." Jean de Meun renders Guillaume de Lorris' text a more valuable commodity by completing it as well as by including translated Latin works throughout (these interpolated bits are mostly pieces of Latin philosophical allegories,

⁴⁹Those seeking contemporary examples might look to worshipful continuations by later authors, like *Gone with the Wind's* sequel, *Scarlett* – or ironic ones like the recent *The Wind Done Gone* – only serve to prove how rare and odd later continuations of literary or pulp works might be. On the topic of secondary writings and continuations, see also Constance Penley's none-too-recent but influential analysis Star Trek fan fiction, "Feminism, Psychoanalysis, and the Study of Popular Culture" in *Cultural Studies* ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula A. Treichler (New York: Routledge 1992) : 479-501. To fantasize in writing about "what happens next" in a beloved work seems fairly common, particularly in the days of the World Wide Web, but to join the canon along with the first author, to join the primary text, that is rare indeed.

insufficiently available in the vernacular as many authors of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries both lament and use as self-justification for their own philosophical production). Completing the *Rose*, rendering it so long, causes it to become a commodity: a full manuscript, expensive, illustratable, rich.⁵⁰ On its own, Guillaume de Lorris' text exists as one among many. With de Meun's continuation, it becomes the centerpiece, if not the whole, of a given manuscript that includes it. A full manuscript instead of just a section of a miscellaneous collection becomes searchable, discrete, read only in relation to itself.

Poets in the Middle Ages often wrote for patrons, offering texts as gifts and also at times including requests for money as part of their poem.

⁵⁰Simon Gaunt has noted that "although a very small number of manuscripts suggest that Guillaume's poem circulated independently for a while in the thirteenth century...the success of the *Rose* is due to its continuation, thereby interestingly inverting the hierarchy one might suppose between 'original' and 'sequel.'" Gaunt, *Retelling the Tale: An Introduction to Medieval French Literature* (London: Duckworth, 2001): 100. Sylvia Huot has noted in *The Romance of the Rose' and its Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) that "another gauge of the reception of the *Rose* is the choice of texts with which it is bound in anthology manuscripts. By far the most frequent occurrence is for the *Rose* to be followed by the *Testament* [of Jean de Meun], often itself followed by the *Codicille* or *Tresor ou Sept articles de la foi*" (33). This indicates that Jean de Meun's authorship of the poem influenced the kinds of manuscripts in which it was found. Huot is relying on Langlois, *Les Manuscrits de 'Roman de la Rose': Description et Classement* (Lille: Tallandier) 1910. Huot's study examines a number of manuscript anthologies where the *Rose* appears next to vernacular as well as Latin works. Some of the works placed next to the *Rose* (when these works aren't simply Jean de Meun's other writings) are didactic, devotional works while others are manuals for lovers, showing a certain amount of productive confusion of the poem's literary reception and the many uses to which it could be put, particularly after Jean de Meun had rendered it too complex for easy classification.

But de Meun does not request money at any point in the poem (although the lover certainly laments his poverty). This is not a text that bears the markings of patronage in any obvious way. Instead it seems to be a gift for a loved one. That loved one has often been supposed to be the lady represented as the Rose, but it is for Bel Acueill that the lover's tears are shed, and the loved one of Amors' speech is clearly Guillaume de Lorris. The world of medieval mourning was full of religious ways to give gifts to the dead (masses and chantries abound) but ways of finishing the work of the dead like commentary or amplification are secular, intellectual, literary gifts that do nothing for the soul of the departed and tend to their reputation and to that which the dead might themselves have valued most highly: the fruits of their living labor. The reading and commentary that is involved in the continuation is a form of speaking *to* and *for* the dead which the medieval exegete performed constantly in his dialogue with his *auctores*.

As I have suggested, the mode of dialogue with the dead used by Jean de Meun might not be so terribly different from the dialogue that contemporary scholars carry on with the past, whether recent (as with Derrida's musing on the work of Paul de Man) or long dead, whose lives continue in citation and in commentary. This way of thinking about the

alterity of the past, it has been suggested, has been significant to furthering interesting work in medieval literary scholarship. Jean de Meun goes further than commentary, further than even the most anachronistic of contemporary critics dare; he lets Guillaume live longer, act longer, be worth more. That is a sort of love-gift (to one that he has never met). It is most certainly a gift of time.

Jean de Meun transforms Guillaume de Lorris' poem into a text so long that reading it absorbs a noticeable part of the reader's life, demands the gift of the reader's time. The continued and completed *Roman de la Rose* also takes an appreciably long time to get through. Like Sheherazade, telling tale after tale to put off the day of her death, de Meun multiplies speeches of advice and small twists of plot, permitting the lover, identified with Guillaume de Lorris in his narrative, to live on before the reader. This attempt to preserve de Lorris need not be "intentional" or earnest to be effective; what is without doubt is that de Meun is making rhetorical use of mourning in a manner that figures same-sex love. This use of rhetoric is, while not necessarily an expression of de Meun's own desires or identity, useful to his poem as a means of adding a second layer, an *alternative* to the heterosexual romance between the lover and the Rose. Intention and identity are not at question here so

much as the manner in which this secondary economy is essential to the troubled gift-world that constitutes the main thematic comment on heterosexual exchange offered by the *Roman de la Rose*.

IV: Giving the Gift of Mourning

Giving time is giving narrative, something that cannot properly be counter-given. By giving a gift, Jacques Derrida has argued, the subject constitutes himself. By having Amors name Guillaume and Jean as authors, Jean *preserves* himself (this is not an entirely unselfish gift, but then, what gift discussed thus far has been unselfish?). At the same time, he specifies where his continuation began and gives Guillaume de Lorris due credit for having begun the project, indeed lists him among deathless authors.

By authoring an allegory wherein he has not yet been born, Jean de Meun manages that which is impossible for most of us: to be present at his own conception (at least to be present as his own mental conception, that alternative to the primal scene!).⁵¹ By doing so, de Meun renders his

⁵¹This would recall the interesting tale of Nero and his mother as told by Reason and discussed in David Hult's "Language and Dismemberment: Abelard, Origen, and the *Romance of the Rose*" in *Rethinking the Romance of the Rose: Text, Image, Reception* ed. Kevin Brownlee and Sylvia Huot (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992). Dismembering his own mother, Nero goes in search of his own origins in a manner that Hult compares to Jean de Meun's discussion of authorship.

own self necessary yet nonexistent, managing to make himself disappear into his own text – like Foucault, longing to slip into the stream of a speech that had already begun.⁵² Although de Meun asks his readers to pray for his own safe birth (and for that other birth, the production of his writing, to go more easily) both prayers would become inadequate by the time his text would have an audience and therefore all the odder as departures from the usual formulae, where authors ask readers to pray for their souls. In the latter, the conventional, the author is already dead; in the former, the one performed by Jean de Meun (via the perhaps problematic agency of Amors), we have the author as a being not yet conceived.

Thus does Jean de Meun give a gift and receive a gift at the same time; he makes himself disappear, yet lays the ground to become, prospectively, alive; he renders himself a living being by giving his gift to Guillaume, by letting it be Guillaume who is described in the present tense, as present as the lover : to reiterate my epigraph, “si vos cri merci,

⁵²“J’aurais aimé m’apercevoir qu’au moment de parler une voix sans nom me précédait depuis longtemps: il m’aurait suffi alors d’enchaîner, de poursuivre la phrase, de me loger, sans qu’on y prenne bien garde, dans ses interstices, comme si elle m’avait fait signe en se tenant, un instant, en suspens.” Michel Foucault *L’ordre du discours*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1971): 7, “I would like to have perceived a nameless voice, long preceding me, leaving me merely to enmesh myself in it, taking up its cadence, and to lodge myself, when no one was looking, in its interstices as if it had paused an instant, in suspense, to beckon me.” *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, trans. Rupert Sawyer (New York: Pantheon, 1972) : 215

jointes paumes,/que cist las doulereus Guillaumes,/qui si bien s'est verrs
moi portez" (Lecoy, 10627-9) (And [I] beg with joined hands for mercy for
poor, sorrowful Guillaume, who has behaved so well towards me" (Horgan,
p. 163). What is the time that is being offered to the finished poem's
implied reader? Does de Meun imagine himself still living at the moment
that his text is being read, rendering the above a coy, kind joke where he
leaves center stage to that superior lover, Guillaume? Or is there irony
here in that de Meun recognizes that he is as dead as Guillaume for the
reader who holds the *Roman de la Rose*?

It is in this that the rhetorical self-conscious quality of the text is
most visible; not simply in the mixing of registers and levels but in the
manner in which the passionate mourning of Amors points to de Meun's
mourning, a mourning that is truly "without sadness" as per Derrida. Jean
de Meun's construction of mourning works *both* as a symptom (in the
strongest version of this reading, potentially revealing something about
his own desires and their incomplete foreclosure) *and* as a rhetorically-
constructed opportunity for evaluating the homoerotics of relationships
between authors (possibly marking the difference that is produced
through vernacular literary production, where the famed literary dead are
not as distant as their Latin forebears must be).

Jacques Derrida's Wellek library lectures, the *Memoires for Paul de Man*, were written immediately after the death of Paul de Man in 1984. These lectures are a memorialization and a mourning for de Man, as well as a reading of de Man's work that strives to continue and expand upon it (perhaps in a somewhat more Derridian than de Manian manner). The memorialization of the lectures refuses a mourning that interiorizes the other, instead defining and performing what Derrida calls "an impossible mourning" (let us not forget that, for Derrida, many things are impossible and their sheer impossibility somehow makes them one's duty to perform). Derrida's lectures argue against the psychoanalytic conception of mimetic interiorization as the correct work of mourning. In other words, instead of a mourning that purports to keep a version of de Man alive inside Derrida's psyche, doing the dead man the injustices of distortion, this mourning strives to permit the mourned to keep their separateness.

Derrida rejects the kind of mourning that he calls a "possible mourning, which would interiorize within us the image, idol or ideal of the other who is dead and lives only in us" and contrasts it with an "impossible mourning, which, leaving the other his alterity, respecting thus his infinite remove, either refuses to take or is incapable of taking the other within

oneself, as in the tomb or the vault of some narcissism.”⁵³ Refusing to do the violence to the other of taking him into himself, Derrida chooses the romance of alterity over the romance of interiorization (literary critics working on medieval texts know well the complicated balance between the two).

Those who have mourned may find it familiar to hear that, for Derrida, too much mourning threatens to devour the other, distorting them in one’s own image; and that one fears performing too much of the opposite, insufficient mourning (but what is sufficiency?) is an infidelity. Without explicit acknowledgment, Derrida’s text also takes up a second, romantic form of mourning, that of continuing de Man’s work by reading de Man’s texts. This is a gift fraught with all of the difficulties and contaminations that we have seen in Jean de Meun’s continuation of Guillaume de Lorris’ labors.

Allegory, literally “speaking otherwise,” works to ensure that, when a mourning takes place, it is one that operates through alterity – this is part of what de Man himself learned in his reading of Walter Benjamin, whose work on allegory he mourns and, it could be said, attempts to

⁵³ Jacques Derrida, *Memoires for Paul de Man: The Wellek Library Lectures at the University of California, Irvine*, trans. Cecile Lindsay, Jonathan Culler and Eduardo Cadava (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986): 6.

continue. It is de Man's work on allegory that Derrida examines in his Welles library lectures. These lectures take up the work of that great theorist of allegory and mourn it, impersonate it and alter that work at the same time.

We are of course aware that even as he mourns and respects de Man's trace, Derrida (like Jean de Meun before him) performs his own aliveness, is himself present in a way that he has himself taught us to notice and to critique. After all, his text was written, then read out loud, then translated, then read on the page, and the marks of this process appear throughout, and he is alive to speak while de Man is dead, just like de Meun shall be alive, Amors tells us, after Guillaume is in his tomb. The mode of allegory as it is performed in the *Roman de la Rose*, actually works against the interiorization of the image of the Other, as Derrida describes the "bad" kind of mourning, splitting all Others into constituent speaking pieces. I would argue that the mode of allegory as it is performed by Jean de Meun in the authorship section of the *Roman de la Rose* performs the good, the impossible mourning, working *against* the interiorization of the image of the Other, keeping the other alive through keeping his text intact and yet at the same time working on it, extending it *in* time.

In reading Amors' speech in the *Roman de la Rose*, the reader might be said to encounter Time directly. Halfway through de Meun's continuation, the reader is informed that they are reading in the aftermath of a loss – that they have been, for some time, anterior to Guillaume de Lorris' death. Knowing this, the reader is enabled to receive the gift of the text offered by Jean de Meun, that gift of continuing Guillaume de Lorris' work. The reader is ordered to recognize this writing as a gift, a complex one, one that changes Guillaume's "original" in profound ways. Guillaume de Lorris is detained and retained, as Paul de Man is retained, not through interiorization (the mourning of the Freudian scheme) but through an entirely different technology. That technology is an allegorical one, and consists of taking up his voice, and *admitting* that one has taken it up, and bringing it forward into the future. This is a technology that might be described as an instance of *prosopopeia* in de Man's definition of the term, as that which, "makes accessible to the senses, in this case the ear, a voice which is out of earshot because it is no longer alive."⁵⁴

Observing the gift from this anterior vantage point, the reader (not any real reader but the reader being constructed by the rhetoric of this gift

⁵⁴Paul de Man, "The Epistemology of Metaphor" *Aesthetic Ideology*, Theory and History of Literature, Vol. 65. (Minneapolis: Minnesota Press, 1996) : 24

exchange, this speech by Amors) becomes aware of the fact of time as it appeared so painfully on Guillaume's garden wall, not as a personification at all but as an agent of the decay of love and of life⁵⁵ — that time passes; the lover ages and dies; the narrative (the gift) continues, but perhaps there may no longer be a counter-gift, except in the form of the trace— in this case, the trace of writing with presence deferred not just by the time lag but in the forever of death and mourning for someone whom one has never met, could never love.

The necessity of a time gap inherent in the gift and of a time commitment from the lover allegorizes the deferral of Jean de Meun's authorial persona and connects the inevitable act of exchange (the gift, but also the act of communication between author and reader) between where one loses oneself and where one finds or makes oneself. The gift, amidst all satiric anxiety about buying and selling in the *Roman de la Rose*, is what demands the time of love, and love, as it turns out, is also that which requires — that is manifested in — the time of mourning.

⁵⁵See, for instance, Emmanuele Baumgartner's essay "The Play of Temporalities; or, the Reported Dream of Guillaume de Lorris" in *Rethinking the Romance of the Rose: Text, Image, Reception*. ed. Kevin Brownlee and Sylvia Huot (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992) or a discussion of Guillaume de Lorris' use of the time of the dream vision as time outside historical time, as an (earnest; which I'm not sure that it *is* in earnest) attempt to control time. Through the use of the dream vision, the dreamer might evade entrapping origins, Baumgartner claims, and although this impulse is Guillaume's, and Jean seems to be engaged (in the section I am discussing) in legitimating his origins (albeit with a smirk, perhaps), this has been a helpful insight.

In *Given Time*, Derrida writes about the economy of the gift, out of what seems to be a need to work through a notion of a gift that *isn't* the basis for all economies. In *Memoires for Paul de Man*, he seeks a counter-economy and refuses interiorization. Derrida, mourning de Man, demands attention to the time lag between gift and counter-gift. So does Jean de Meun, when he self-consciously chooses to place himself in the future-impossible, into a queer future, giving an un-restitutable continued life to Guillaume de Lorris, letting *him* be the one who gets the girl. De Meun mourns impossibly for his impossible object by continuing his work and by re-making himself, giving an offering of himself, producing his own authorial voice as that of the one who is merely the poet — a poet who gets to give the gift of life, who gets to perform all the proper rituals of mourning, who does not exchange but rather gives... the poet who gets, in the end, to get and keep the boy.

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